

Dear Co-Chair Kennedy, Co-Chair Miner, Co-Chair Demicco, Vice Chair Flexer, Vice Chair Gresko, Vice Chair Somers, Ranking Member Harding, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

Please accept my testimony on the following bills before the Environment Committee:

**SB 522 -- an act authorizing bear hunting, which I strongly oppose.** There are much more effective and humane methods to control the bear population and any resulting damage or threats from bears. These include learning how to remove attractants (e.g., accessible garbage, pet food left outside) and, if necessary, how to "haze." These are much more simple, effective, and science-based solutions to conflicts with wildlife. An outrageous claim being made by proponents is that population size will double every few years, but this is simply not true: bears are a very slow-to-reproduce species, and in addition, have many natural checks to their population size. Slow reproduction rates make bear populations susceptible to overhunting. We must learn from recent experiences in other states, such as New Jersey where even mothers and cubs were recklessly killed, or Florida, where the state agency had to stop the hunt after one year because too many bears were killed. With only around 700 bears in the entire state of Connecticut, we need to protect our bears from a similar hunting frenzy, and preserve these bears for future generations.

**HB 5499 -- would expand Sunday hunting** I also **strongly oppose**. I want a day to enjoy the woods in peace for myself and my companion animals, and not worry about my safety or theirs. This bill does nothing to reduce the incidence of Lyme disease, and will not reduce the deer population in any sustainable way, as the population will bounce back. I disagreed with allowing bow hunting on Sundays, and this is an outrageous expansion that is not fair to the overwhelming majority of non-consumptive users (e.g., hikers, birders, mountain bikers).

Thank you for your consideration of these bills and my positions.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Newell  
243 East Hill Road  
Canton, CT